

Iraq cancels Beirut flights

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq on Monday cancelled all direct flights to and from Lebanon because of "inadequate security" at Beirut's international airport, a reliable source said. The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the civil aviation department here cancelled Beirut airport that "Middle East Airlines (MEA) flights between Beirut and Baghdad were cancelled as of today and until further notice." MEA station manager in Baghdad, Abdul Latif Hamandi, could not be reached for comment. A telephone operator at the MEA office here, confirmed that "flights between Beirut and Baghdad were cancelled." The source said the Iraqi civil aviation department's cable to Beirut airport did not mention any reason for cancelling direct flights. The source, however, noted that MEA advised "some three months ago by the Iraqi authorities that the Beirut flight was a major concern to Iraq due to inadequate security at Beirut airport."

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

The next issue of the Jordan Times will appear on Thursday, Dec. 27, 1984 due to the Christmas holiday. The editor and staff of the Jordan Times wish readers and advertisers a very happy Christmas.

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Jordanian student dies in Sofia

AMMAN (J.T.) — A cable received Monday by the Foreign Ministry from the Jordanian embassy in Bulgaria said that Jordanian student Inad Fawzi Jawhari, studying at the Sofia University, has died. The cable did not give the cause of his death. The Foreign Ministry asked his family to call at the Consular Department in the ministry.

Pakistan detains 2 opposition leaders

KARACHI (R) — Pakistani military authorities detained two leading opposition politicians Monday on the eve of an opposition rally, opposition sources said. They said Khwaja Khairuddin, secretary general of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), and Sherbaz Mazar, president of the banned National Democratic Party (NDP) were detained at their homes in Karachi, capital of Sindh province. Both leaders were due to speak against the military government during a rally here Tuesday at the mausoleum of Pakistan's founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, to mark his birthday.

Soviet parliament team leaves Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — A Soviet parliamentary team left Kuwait Monday after a one-week visit during which it called for a U.N.-sponsored conference to end the Middle East conflict. During the visit, members of parliament from both countries issued a joint statement calling for withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied Arab territory. Kuwait is the only member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which also includes Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, to have diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

Tikhonov shortens visit to Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Tikhonov has shortened a visit to Turkey beginning Tuesday in order to return early to Moscow, a Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman said Monday. He said Mr. Tikhonov would leave Turkey on Thursday morning instead of flying to Istanbul as planned for a day's sightseeing. "He has to be in Moscow," the spokesman said without elaboration. Turkey was told of the change Sunday night, he said. Tikhonov to sign accords in Turkey, page 2

Tureiki in Syria

DAMASCUS (API) — Libyan Foreign Minister Abdul Salam Tureiki arrived in Damascus Monday for talks with Syrian officials, the official Syrian Arab News Agency SANA reported. The agency did not spell out the issues that will be discussed by the two allies in the Arab World. But reliable sources in the Syrian capital, who requested anonymity, said Mr. Tureiki's talks were expected to focus on the Iran-Iraq war and the recent resumption of diplomatic relations between Jordan and Egypt.

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Bethlehem celebrates Christmas under shadow of Israeli occupation

The Associated Press

BETHLEHEM, occupied West Bank — The town where Jesus was born was decked with gaily coloured streamers and lights on Christmas Eve Monday, contrasting sharply with the olive-drab uniforms of the Israeli occupation troops in charge of security.

On rooftops surrounding Manger Square, soldiers carried rifles and trained binoculars on the crowds below. Others, with explosive detectors, checked all those entering the square. A green-clad woman soldier passed a detector over the body of a Palestinian girl entering the square to participate in a scout procession. The eight-year-old girl, Miriam Salah, laughed and said "it tickled."

Israel, which occupied Bethlehem and the rest of the West Bank in the 1967 war, maintains tight security in the town. Soldiers and policemen patrol the narrow winding streets and Manger Square where the Church of the Nativity stands.

Bethlehem was expecting up to 80,000 pilgrims for the holidays. Groups of visitors from the United States, Europe and Asia mingled in the square with Bethlehem residents wearing Arab headgear and black-clad nuns arriving for prayers.

The Church of the Nativity dates to the fourth century when the Emperor Constantine erected a basilica on the site where tradition says Jesus was born. Brown-robed Franciscan monks swept the stone-tiled floors to prepare them for Christmas services. The church complex, restored by crusaders in 12th century and built like a small fortress, is shared by Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Greek Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox.

Outside the church, a 10-metre Christmas tree stood next to the Bethlehem police station and a big screen where the midnight mass will be shown live via closed-circuit television from inside the church.

The midnight service in the Franciscan Church of St. Catherine's, which is part of the Church of the Nativity complex, will also be broadcast live to dozens of countries all over the world.

Bethlehem, which means house of bread in Hebrew and Christ's language of Aramaic, nestles in the hills, some eight kilometres south of Jerusalem. Its name is suggestive of the fertile valleys and rich olive groves which surround the town of 15,000 built on several hills dotted with sand-coloured stone houses.

The town's population is mostly Christian, but Muslims live here too and directly opposite the Church of the Nativity stands a mosque. Five times a day the church bells coincide with the call of Muslim clergymen urging the faithful to prayer.

Elias Freij, the Christian mayor of Bethlehem and a leading Palestinian moderate, said that Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres was expected to attend the town during the celebrations Monday — the first ever Christmas visit by an Israeli premier.

"It is a nice gesture and I wasn't surprised," the mayor said in an interview in his office where a small Christmas tree twinkled with lights. "I hope that 1985 will be year of political initiatives and moves toward solving the Israel-Arab conflict."

The mayor said he hoped "Israeli leaders will have the courage and wisdom to negotiate a territorial compromise with King Hussein."

Mr. Peres's Labour Party advocates a "territorial compromise" based on the return of major population centres to Arabs with the exception of Jerusalem. But no Arab leader has yet indicated a willingness to agree to anything less than a full Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967.

"There cannot be a military solution only a political solution to the conflict," Mr. Freij said. "King Hussein wants to trade territory for peace and I agree with this formula. The best solution is co-existence between Arabs and Jews."

Masri briefs Greens delegation on Mideast peace prospects

By Salameh B. Ne'matt
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri met Monday with members of a visiting West German official delegation from the Greens Party and held talks with them on the latest Middle East developments and Jordanian-Palestinian relations, a West German embassy official said. Charge d'Affaires Rodiger Lemp said the seven-member delegation was briefed by Mr. Masri on prospects for peace in the region and the possibility of a future Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

Mr. Lemp, who attended the meeting, said in a telephone interview with the Jordan Times that Mr. Masri explained to the delegation that the framework for such a confederation has been agreed on and that details are to be agreed on in the ongoing Jordanian-Palestinian dialogue.

During the meeting with the delegation, which is on the third leg of a tour which also took them to Lebanon and Syria, Mr. Masri

explained the Kingdom's search for a just and permanent solution to the Palestinian problem and total Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories.

Mr. Masri also renewed Jordan's call for an international conference to be held under United Nations' auspices involving all parties to the Middle East conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

At the meeting, the delegation, which includes two members of the West German parliament (Bundestag), called on Israel to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and stressed the principle of non-admissibility of the acquisition of land by force, Mr. Lemp said.

The delegation is planning to cross the King Hussein Bridge to the occupied West Bank Tuesday to meet with representatives of Israeli peace movements and Palestinian leaders to discuss the Palestinian problem and Israel's occupation of the Arab territories.

Mr. Lemp said the Israeli authorities might not allow Miss Hei-

rich into the occupied territories. However, he said, an Israeli decision to deny Miss Heinrich entry for her outright support of the PLO could be embarrassing to the Israeli authorities as Miss Heinrich carries a diplomatic passport in her capacity as member of the European Parliament.

During their stay here, the delegation met with PLO officials and were hoping to meet later Monday with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat who is currently here for talks with Jordanian leaders.

In Lebanon, the delegation, which includes Greens Party member of Arab origin, Mohammad Azzam, 34, and West German journalist working for Der Stern magazine Jochen Schildt, met with Prime Minister Rashid Karami, former Premier Salim Hoss and cabinet members Nabih Berri and Walid Junblat as well as Palestinian refugees and Lebanese fighters.

In Damascus, they met with officials of Syrian-based Palestinian commando groups and Syrian officials.

Rival Lebanese leaders threaten air, sea traffic

BEIRUT (AP) — Rival militia leaders traded threats to disrupt air and sea travel from Lebanon Monday after militiamen tried to prevent a Paris-bound jetliner from taking off because it was carrying the 13-year-old daughter of a cabinet minister.

Officials of both warring militias said they would no longer permit the other side to control main travel facilities. Militiamen roam Beirut's international airport, while their rivals have for years run the main passenger seaport of Jounieh, just north of the capital. Beirut port does not serve passenger ships.

A Paris-bound Middle East Airlines jet was delayed for two hours at the airport Sunday by militiamen of the mostly Druze Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) who blocked the runway, police said. The militiamen announced they would not let the plane go until Roula Hashem, daughter of Minister of Telecommunications Joseph Hashem, left the aircraft.

PSP leader Walid Junblat later ordered his men to drop the dem-

and and apologised for the incident.

The PSP later issued a statement saying it had been believed Mr. Hashem himself was on board.

Israelis ambushed

Reporters in Sidon, provincial capital of the occupied south, said resistance forces ambushed an Israeli patrol on the coastal highway south of the city at 7:50 a.m. (0555 GMT) Monday.

The telephone reports to Beirut said one Israeli jeep and on half-track armoured vehicle were hit by rocket-propelled grenades and an Israeli helicopter removed wounded from five and eight Israeli casualties in two trips from the scene.

Military sources in Tel Aviv acknowledged that two explosions occurred near Sidon Monday morning as Israeli patrols passed by, but they said they had nothing on casualties.

Reports from Sidon said Israeli troops made 20 arrests in villages near the ambush area.



NCOS GRADUATED: Public Security Director General Lieutenant-General Diab Yusef presents an award to a non-commissioned officer who graduated Monday (See story on page 3)

Ustinov's remains interred; Chernenko absent at funeral

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Leaders of the Soviet Union's Communist Party, government and military Monday interred the ashes of Defence Minister Dmitri Ustinov in the Kremlin Wall in a grand state funeral.

Marshal Ustinov's remains, carried into square in a black urn born by a gun carriage and accompanied by goose-stepping soldiers, were placed into a niche among Soviet politicians, soldiers and other heroes.

President Konstantin Chernenko did not attend the funeral and diplomats said the freezing weather rather than ill health probably kept him away.

Officials at the Red Square ceremony gave no reason for Mr. Chernenko's absence. Mr. Chernenko, 73, suffers from emphysema, a chest complaint aggravated by extreme cold.

The temperature in central Moscow was minus 22 degrees Centigrade (minus seven Fahrenheit) as the pallbearers in heavy coats and warm fur hats

ascended Lenin's Mausoleum for the funeral parade. It was so cold that the metal instruments of the military band for the funeral were covered with left. Marshal Ustinov, who died last Thursday after a bout with pneumonia and complications from surgery, had lain in state for two days in the black-draped Hall of Columns.

He was cremated overnight and his ashes put into a cylindrical black urn that in turn was placed into a palanquin covered with plastic flowers and leaves.

A gun carriage bore the palanquin from the House of Unions to the Kremlin, flanked by soldiers who goose stepped slowly across Revolution Square, to the strains of Chopin's Funeral March.

Senior military officers headed the cortege carrying his many awards on small red cushions. Following behind the gun carriage, towed by an armoured vehicle, were relatives and friends of the dead man.

Gregory Romanov, 61, the pol-

ithro member who headed the funeral commission, and Bulgarian Defence Minister Dobri Dzhurov gave orations praising Mr. Ustinov's career and life. Marshal Ustinov's successor as defence minister, Marshal Sergei L. Sokolov, then gave a funeral oration, praising Marshal Ustinov as "a talented leader and man of high sense of duty" and lauding his achievements for the armed forces.

Most NATO countries boycotted the funeral, which they deemed a military parade, in protest against the five-year-old Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Only Greece and Turkey sent diplomats to the ceremony.

In London, official sources said the decision to stay away was in line with past procedure by major NATO countries and followed routine consultations. The speeches lasted barely 30 minutes, unusually brief by Soviet standards, and were an indication of how cold it was.

Iraq vows to pressure Iran for political solution

BAHRAIN (AP) — An Iraqi commander declared Monday that his country has acquired new effective weaponry that it will use to "pressure" Iran into dropping its quest for a military solution to the 51-month-old Gulf war.

Meanwhile, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz called on the 45-member Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to take the suitable measures to force Iran to accept the OIC call for peace.

The Iraqi push for political and military pressure on their Gulf war foe came in the wake of Iran's rejection of a bid for peace made by the OIC foreign ministers conference that concluded Saturday in Sanaa, Yemen.

The Iraqi commander, General Hamed Ahmad was quoted by the Gulf News Agency as saying in Baghdad that "new destructive weapons will give Iraq ample chance to expand its blockade" on Iran's Kharg Island key oil terminal in the northern war zone.

"We shall do so without drastically affecting commercial navigation in the region or the international interests linked to the economic outlets of our sister Arab Gulf states," he said without elaborating.

Iraq introduced an air and sea blockade around Kharg at the outset of the year to choke off Iran's oil exports, the backbone of its economy, and has attacked dozens of oil tankers and freighters in the process.

Since Dec. 8, the Iraqis, who reportedly received new long-range jet fighters from France, have stepped up attacks on shipping in Iranian waters. The commander said that Iraq was now capable not only of attacking ships, but the terminal itself as well as economic installations inside Iran.

16 die in Italian train blast

BOLOGNA, Italy (R) — At least 16 people were killed by a bomb which tore through a train crowded with holiday makers in a tunnel under the central Italian Apennine Mountain range Sunday night, police said Monday.

On Sunday night the Civil Protection Ministry reported that at least 25 people had died, but by dawn this morning the confirmed death toll stood at 16, with more than 100 people injured.

Anonymous telephone callers to Italian news media claimed responsibility for the blast on behalf of at least seven political organisations, some right-wing some left-wing and some unknown.

Fifteen bodies were pulled from the wrecked carriages after they were towed out of the tunnel to the small station of San Benedetto Val Di Sambro on the main line between Florence and Bologna. An injured woman died later in hospital.

Railway officials said it was still possible other bodies might be found in the wreckage of the express which had been carrying some 600 people, many of them winter holiday makers, from Naples to Milan.

Among organisations implicated by the callers were the far-right Ordine Nuovo (New Order) and the far-left Red Brigades. But further callers denied both claims.

Investigators were struck by the similarity with a bomb blast on another train in the same tunnel which killed 12 people in August, 1974.

That explosion was claimed by the rightist Ordine Nero (black order) group, but three neo-fascist leaders brought to trial were acquitted for lack of proof. In another outrage in the Bologna area, long controlled by Communist and left-wing administrations, 85 people were killed by a bomb at the city's railway station in 1980. It was Western Europe's worst single post-war terrorist massacre.

The latest bomb went off just after 7 p.m. (1800 GMT) Sunday night, wrecking a second class carriage and damaging two others towards the rear of the train when it was six kilometres into the 19-kilometre tunnel.

Investigators said initial evidence was that a timed device had been placed on a luggage rack. Some speculated it could have been put on board at Florence. "There could have been hundreds of dead," regional fire brigade inspector Cesare Sangiorgi said. "If steel plate twisted by the explosion had gone under the wheels, the train would certainly have been derailed."

Survivors reaching Milan Monday spoke of moments of terror and confusion when the train ground to a halt in the tunnel after a deafening roar. Some thought a boiler had blown up in the restaurant car.

Concetta Boecchia from near Naples said she got "a blast of glass in the face. I thought: Somebody's thrown a stone. Then a woman shouted 'it's a bomb'. Everybody was bleeding. It was worse than the (1980) earthquake."

The massacre on the eve of the Christmas holiday provoked outrage and dismay that terrorism was still active after it seemed to have been crushed.

Heavy turnout reported in Indian polls

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — Millions of Indian citizens voted Monday on the first day of a general election expected to give Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi a decisive mandate to pursue the socialist and non-aligned policies of his assassinated mother.

Mr. Gandhi's governing Congress Party, long dominated by the late Indira Gandhi, campaigned largely on a wave of sympathy aroused by her death and on the need to uphold her heritage. Congress seemed headed for a landslide, with only the margin of its victory in doubt.

When polls closed at 4 p.m. (1030 GMT) in most places, many districts had reported early turnouts of up to 60 per cent, relatively heavy by Indian standards. Mrs. Gandhi was last returned to office in 1980 by a 57 per cent turnout, giving her a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha, the Lower House of the Indian parliament.

Scattered violence marred election day, though less than in many previous Indian elections. Six persons were reported killed in election frays in Bihar state, an independent candidate died of injuries he suffered in an attack by unknown persons on election eve.

One Communist Party worker was killed in a clash with political opponents in Tripura in the northeast. Another Communist was reported killed in Jharkharpur in Bihar state Monday by the explosion of a bomb he was carrying.

Several persons were injured in a clash in Amethi, where Mr. Gandhi's estranged sister-in-law, Maneka Gandhi, waged a bitter uphill campaign to unseat the prime minister in his own constituency.

The election was spread over three days for security reasons, with 379 of the 542 Lok Sabha

Arafat to visit Kuwait, S. Yemen

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat is expected to visit Kuwait Wednesday for talks with the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, Palestinian sources here said Monday.

Mr. Arafat, currently in Amman, will then go on to Aden, south Yemen, with his senior aide in the Fateh group, Salah Khalaf, who is already in Kuwait.

The sources, quoted by Reuters, did not disclose the purpose of the Aden visit. South Yemen, along with Algeria, has been at the forefront of efforts to bridge divisions which have split the PLO and head the rift between Mr. Arafat and Syria.

The sources also said top-level PLO delegation will visit Moscow soon at the invitation of the Soviet authorities.

They said three PLO Executive Committee members — Mahmoud Abbas, Fahd Qawasmeh and Jawid Al Gussan — would visit the Czechoslovak capital Prague on Jan. 2 for three days before going on to Moscow.

In Amman, a PLO spokesman said Mr. Arafat had lunch Monday with King Hussein after a working dinner between the two leaders and Jordanian and Palestinian officials Sunday night.

The King's talks with the PLO leader covered the situation of Palestinians under Israeli occupation, and reactions to the meeting in Amman of PNC, the Palestinian official, quoted by Reuters said.

The Palestinian delegation with Mr. Arafat included the newly elected PNC speaker, Sheikh Abdul Hamid Al Saeh. Mr. Arafat's military deputy Khalil Al Wazir (Abu Jihad), two members of the PLO Executive Committee and Mr. Arafat's political adviser, Hani Al Hassan.

TED IN ETHIOPIA:- Senator Edward Kennedy, Democrat-Massachusetts, helps serve food to victims of the famine at the Bati refugee camp in Ethiopia. Sen. Kennedy was on tour of the several camps that were set up to aid famine victims (AP wirephoto)

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| 9:30 | Abu Dhabi | Dubai | Sharjah |
| 9:30 | Abu Dhabi | Dubai | Sharjah |
| 9:45 | Abu Dhabi | Dubai | Sharjah |
| 10:10 | Abu Dhabi | Dubai | Sharjah |
| 10:10 | Abu Dhabi | Dubai | Sharjah |

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Demand of Christmas

IT IS Christmas Day, and the eyes of the Christian World are turning to Bethlehem. One does not have to peer too hard through the incense or beyond the gathered mass of celebrants to see that the Holy Land remains desecrated by occupation. Or that all is not exactly peaceful in the homeland of peace.

In Bethlehem, the popular mood is mute. In Nazareth, it is despairing. In Nablus, Hebron and Bir Zeit, it is restive.

The Israelis are being their usual selves: They are marking the holy season — and it is supposed to be one of their sacred celebrations as well — with the sight of their guns and jeeps at every sight of the holy cities of the West Bank, and with their usual outbursts of brutality against the people under occupation.

This outrage is supposed to go unnoticed while the Israeli leaders tackle their economic woes and their army's occupation of South Lebanon.

It is not only the violent and repressive Israeli attitudes towards genuine displays of Palestinian nationalism that makes the concept of Arab-Israeli peace unlikely. It is the continuation and consolidation of the occupation itself that renders the possibility of a lasting settlement in the area totally out of the question.

The added provocation of Jewish settlement-building, together with the daily indignities heaped upon the inhabitants of the occupied territories, and the Arab inhabitants of Israel itself, will remain the true obstacle to peace until they are stopped by the Israelis themselves.

We see no cause for optimism on this day. But we have a demand to make.

Christian Americans and Europeans, as Christian believers everywhere, should be reminded more than ever of the responsibilities of their governments and organisations, and indeed themselves, to see that justice — and not some twisted, disguised form of armed occupation and continued oppression — is brought to the Holy Land.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Like daughter like mother

BRITISH PRIME Minister Margaret Thatcher did not find a more important matter to discuss with Mr. Gorbachev than the propaganda issue of Soviet Jews, and their emigration to occupied Palestine. Although the Soviet official ended the discussion by indicating to Mrs. Thatcher that his country does not allow any party to interfere in its internal affairs, however, the question that imposes itself here is why Britain always attempts to adopt the American stand, and why London tries to follow the steps of Washington in committing the same mistakes of contradicting itself regarding the importance of matching principles and deeds.

We are quite aware of the dimensions of the American-Zionist campaign which made the emigration of Soviet Jews the most important issue. A cheap propaganda campaign is launched against a background of cold war to serve the Zionist movement. We are also aware that this campaign is ridiculed and denounced by the Soviets, because they are citizens of a great country who know their rights and duties and who are in no need of the U.S. or Zionism to show them the way.

What we want to ask here is whether it is a right of the Palestinians that Britain, which wrote the first chapter of their tragedy and the U.S., which is responsible for the rest of the book, should do something to make for the loss of their homeland and their suffering.

The U.S. and Britain urge the transplant of Soviet citizens in some other land over which they have no rights; and U.S. and British rejection of the return of the Palestinian people to their homeland are instances that contradict all human values, morals and principles.

If the British prime minister has opted to tie up new decisions to American ones, the least she could do as a manifestation of goodwill and sovereignty is not to work for deepening injustices against innocent people if it can do nothing for redressing offence.

Al Dustour: Special Saudi responsibility

IT SEEMS that Arab efforts and contacts aimed at convening the long-postponed Arab summit for over a year has now entered a more serious phase than ever, especially after the hard test of Arab will for bridging gaps and reconciliation.

After all the events that occurred in the Arab arena in the period since the last Arab summit was convened in Fez in 1982, the continuation of paralysis in the highest Arab decision-making body due to Arab differences is a symptom of surrender to tragic reality. It is a public Arab confession admitting weakness in the face of the enemy.

It is not reasonable at all that Arab differences should be allowed to impede convening an Arab summit conference, as summit meetings are founded in the first place to solve such differences. Neither is it accepted that summits should be postponed for fear of clashes whether before or after the holding of a conference.

Sawt Al Shaab: A summit to confront threats

WE DO appreciate the efforts exerted for convening an Arab summit as such an event is general Arab need and inevitably imposed on us by the nature of the circumstances and the reality of the situation.

The summit is not an aim by itself, but the means through which we can move ahead for joint Arab action at the summit level, which is a burden that running away from is like evading historical responsibilities at a dark and most difficult phase in the history of the Arab Nation.

And so as not to make the summit an issue by itself, and so as not to mix priorities in the midst of unilateral moves, the convening of the summit should be a step towards a new reality and a beginning for a collective Arab action.

The Arab Nation is in no need for oratory rallies nor for protocol meetings but is really in need of a summit that gathers all Arab leaders for confronting grave threats such as the Iran-Iraq war, Lebanon, the Palestinian cause and the Western Sahara issue and on top of all, inter-Arab relations without the straightening of which no other problem could be solved.

The summit we want is a summit of responsibility, honesty and courage, not a summit where leaders would compete in delivering lectures and issuing statements that do not restore occupied lands or send back home an evicted person.

There is a chance to play for peace

Henry Kissinger explores the path along which the resumed arms talks could progress to some success

THE EAGERNESS with which the Soviets have resumed arms control talks marks a complete reversal of a position they have held adamantly for the better part of two years. They have abandoned what they had presented as the immutable condition: that American missiles first be withdrawn from Europe.

Whether this represents a change of tactics or of strategy, or whether the present politeness is capable of a fluid diplomacy, is out of Western control. What is in control of the West is to avoid raising excessive expectations about negotiations that have not yet even started. Western over-eagerness could tempt the Soviets to stall to elicit unilateral concessions. Or else it could produce an agreement that, because it avoids all fundamental issues, will be only an interlude in the East-West conflict.

A great deal depends therefore on America's ability to define criteria by which to measure progress. This will be far from simple. For over a decade the phrase detente polarised the American domestic debate. The Reagan administration has so far muted this controversy by a skilful balancing act which combined the rhetoric of the opponents of detente with many of the policies of its advocates. But now that negotiations are starting in earnest it will no longer be able to avoid the issues by deft verbal formulations.

The beginning of wisdom is to admit — however painful this may be in the light of previous pronouncements — that the administration is now involved in an essentially irrevocable process indistinguishable in substance from what used to be called detente. As its fourth year in office began, the administration obviously concluded that the American people and its allies would not support confrontation except as a last resort. Having eloquently committed itself, the administration's credibility and allied support depend on making clear that any failure of negotiations is

not its fault. American relations with the Soviet Union have been characterised by oscillations between extremes of intransigence and extremes of conciliation — something to which the present administration is far from immune. Historically, Americans have either sought to solve tensions in one conclusive negotiation or to defeat a recalcitrant opponent in battle. In either case there was a clear-cut terminal point. Americans have had little experience in working out a modus vivendi — especially on arms — with a nation that continues to proclaim its ideological hostility and to challenge American interests globally.

Unfortunately the paradox that the apocalyptic nature of nuclear war imposes precisely this necessity became apparent during the traumatic period when Vietnam and Watergate converged to divide America. An attacking detente proved a convenient — and relatively safe — way to avoid facing the central tragedy that it was America's divisions, much more than its adversary's cunning, that sapped its credibility and weakened its international position.

No policy — least of all detente — can substitute for a strong and purposeful United States. Still, granting that the conflict with the Soviets has no clear-cut terminal point, it is nevertheless possible to make agreements that reduce the danger of nuclear war and the risk of political crisis.

Now that the Reagan administration has ended America's self-flagellation, the question no longer brooks evasion. Regrettably American governmental procedures in any administration are not well-suited for the task of defining long-range national objectives. The adversary process from which American foreign policy emerges leads each department to put forward its own, often parochial, set of proposals. What passes for national strategy is usually a compromise negotiated in the White House and as a last resort imposed by the president.



Over the past four years the historic rivalry between the state and defence departments has more than once degenerated into personal animus. Such disputes are especially difficult for a president to referee. He can never be as "expert" as the experts who disagree before him so eloquently in their recommendations. So in the end, the procedure drives him towards a compromise that may combine the disadvantages of every proposed course of action. It also tends to transmute factual issues into theological ones. A good example is the question over who is ahead in the arms race. To be sure, the issue involves weapons of unprecedented complexity and for which there is no operational experience. But it cannot be beyond the wit of the American government to devise a comparison of the probable growth of nuclear arms with, and without, arms control agreements.

Even greater precision should be attainable with respect to the issue of verifiability. There is no doubt that the Soviets have often barely observed the letter of agreements. In some cases they clearly seem to have violated them. Critics have seized on even the most technical discrepancy to assault a process they oppose for quite different reasons. Successive administrations have been reluctant to make a formal charge of violation lest they undermine the domestic support for negotiation and because they did not know what to do about it. The factual content of verification has, as a result, received insufficient study — especially the tolerances that must be part of any agreement. Some questions such as these require resolution.

What is the U.S. capacity to verify the numbers of each Soviet strategic weapon? What is the margin of uncertainty? Is that margin strategically significant either by itself or in combination with other weapons? What counter-measures are available to Soviet violations and how rapidly can they be implemented?

If the United States cannot resolve these technical questions it will surely be stymied by the more fundamental issue that each day bears down on it more heavily: contemporary weapons technology has made traditional arms control theory obsolescent. Developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s, this theory assumed stationary missiles and relatively inaccurate single warheads. Since it would take more than one attacking missile to destroy an offensive one, it was plausible to believe that if one could negotiate essential equality of strategic forces the incentive for surprise attack would have been removed.

Modern technology has overtaken this simple equation. Today launchers can carry 10 or more highly accurate warheads. Some missiles are becoming mobile. Equality in numbers of launchers has become less and less relevant to strategic stability. Even reductions can prove meaningless or dangerous if they do not ameliorate the disproportion between warheads and launchers. The appointment of the experienced and sophisticated Paul H. Nitze as special adviser to the secretary of state is an important step — especially in the negotiating field. But nobody can solve the conceptual issues, act as chief negotiator and achieve a bipartisan consensus at the same time. I cannot think of a more suitable occasion for a bipartisan commission to define the basic options for the president and his senior advisers, thereby making it unnecessary for the president to referee abstruse technical decisions.

Whatever the organisational device, the internal debate in the administration must be shifted from controversy about the importance of arms control to an analysis of which specific limitations would in fact reduce the danger of nuclear war. Otherwise the United States will be driven by negotiating tactics, or impose on itself the absurdity of accepting reductions in strategic forces that it refuses to put forward as bargaining chips in negotiation — in the name of reducing the budgetary deficit.

There has been even less of a systematic effort to come to grips with the complicated relationship of offensive and defensive forces. In fact the so-called "Star Wars" issue threatens to turn into one of those symbolic tests of will with which America drains its national purpose. Critics have jumped gleefully on extravagant presidential claims implying the possibility of a perfect civilian defence. In fact the possibility of protecting retaliatory forces and lessening the danger of attack from third nuclear countries cannot simply be shrugged off with emotional proclamations. To base deterrence irrevocably on the mutual threat to exterminate civilians would be a fateful decision. When mass slaughter becomes a mathematical equation, the siren songs of the advocates of pacifism and unilateral disarmament will sound increasingly attractive in the democracies.

The administration can approach the problem of defence in three alternative ways: 1. Impose a moratorium on testing of all defensive weapons at the beginning of the negotiations. 2. Use defensive weapons as leverage to obtain a massive cut in offensive forces, that reduces the danger of nuclear war. 3. Explore an agreement containing a balance between offensive and defensive forces that would substantially reduce the threat of nuclear war.

It is not necessary to decide between the last two options at this stage. Indeed, it cannot be done in the absence of systematic, careful, uncensored studies. But a moratorium at the beginning of the negotiating process — or a slow down imposed by Congress — would be bitterly wrong. The Soviets have left little doubt that their principal objective in resuming the dialogue is to stop the American efforts to develop a ballistic missile defence. According to the media, important elements of the American government favour a moratorium with the argument that testing can always be resumed if negotiations fail. But previous negotiating experience should remind us of the vacuity of such arguments. No moratorium in the arms field has ever been ended by the United States, because negotiations never fail unambiguously, and because no president is eager to tempt the political storm such a step would cause. A moratorium would complicate the ability to obtain congressional appropriations. It would foreclose the option of using defensive weapons either for leverage or as part of an agreement. It would almost surely slow down the pace of negotiations because the United States would have handed the Soviets their ultimate goal as a unilateral gesture.

Before the United States goes very far in negotiations a close process of consultation with its allies must begin. But past experience suggests that they will be nearly as uneasy about a separate bilateral U.S.-Soviet deal as they were previously about being drawn by us into an unwanted confrontation.

Perhaps Soviet rigidity will defeat the best efforts of America and its allies. But it is not often that an opportunity occurs to change East-West relations fundamentally. In the past the West has too often settled for the essentially psychological relief inherent in an easing of tensions. Our challenge now is to translate the yearning for peace into concrete terms that improve not only the tone but also the substance of international relations — The Sunday Times.

Middle East



Taboo surrounds Transylvania's minorities

Nearly two million ethnic Hungarians live in the western-central region of Transylvania, which houses most of Romania's minorities. David Buchan, recently in Transylvania, looks at the sensitivity surrounding minority problems in this Eastern European country.

FRONTIERS in Eastern Europe do not, and probably never can be made to coincide with the region's ethnic patchwork. Virtually every country has its minority problems and none more fraught than Romania's. The way in which this compounds the Bucharest government's curious isolation from East and West became evident again this autumn.

In September, a high level Romanian delegation to Budapest was presented by the Hungarian government with 12 pages of suggestions on how Romania could improve the lot of its nearly two million ethnic Hungarians. A few weeks later, President Ceausescu found that his West German hosts in Bonn had put his treatment of Romania's 300,000 ethnic Germans awkwardly high on the agenda of their talks with him.

Since this was behind the scenes diplomacy, the Romanians reacted with what Bonn and Budapest characterised as aloof indifference. But at the recent public report by the Council of Europe calling Romania to task for its attitude towards its minorities, Bucharest becomes positively apologetic. "One thousand and one untruths" was the reaction of a senior Foreign Ministry official interviewed in Bucharest. He said that the Strasbourg assembly representatives were free to come and see the situation for themselves.

A certain surreality, however, confronts visitors to Transylvania, the large area of western-central

Romania, ringed by the Carpathians, where the minorities are most present. It has little to do with local legends of Vlad the Impaler, or with the 19th century time warp of a semi-forgotten part of Europe in which horse, buggy and sometimes water buffalo still reign.

Rather, it is the impression that Romanian officials (enthusiastic about disarmament) regard foreign inspection of their minorities in the same way other countries do that of military bases. It is also the contrast in the minority communities, between official spokesmen who are almost too blithe to be credible and the others who are almost too paranoid to be audible.

Yet there are gradations. Romania, uniquely in the Socialist bloc, never broke relations with Israel and has allowed Jews to leave. There has always been a price. Money is the most consistent element in Romanian emigration policy, as reflected in the (currently unimplemented) 1982 education tax for would-be emigrants. An ethnic German has to pay various go-betweens DM8,000-10,000 (\$2,568-\$3,210) to get the right papers to leave Romania. This is not an official tax. Bonn has complained to Bucharest several times about this, naming the middle men, some of whom have been arrested. Ethnic German leaders have also urged their communities not to submit to this kind of blackmail, but to no avail.

In fact more Germans are leaving now: 15,700 last year and probably 16-17,000 this year. This is above the German community's birth rate and is probably the result of somewhat tougher pressure by the Kohl government than its predecessor. On the other hand Germans from the East are not the godsend to the West German employer that they were in better economic days and Bonn would also like conditions in Romania to tempt more ethnic Germans to stay. Chancellor Kohl said after his talks with President Ceausescu last month: "I think we moved something." His planned trip to Bucharest next year will test that statement.

Romania's Hungarians lack the safety valve of emigration. Budapest wants them to stay put, on what it regards as historic Hungarian territory (until awarded to Romania in 1920) and to make the best of it.

The best of it, as Mr. Gyula Fejes, secretary to the Hungarian Council in Bucharest, points out, is that Hungarians have representation in the National Assembly, government, Communist Party, trade unions, which reflects their 7.8 per cent share of Romania's 22 million population. He also cites Hungarians as having 10 theatres, one opera, 32 journals and magazines, weekly television broadcasts and 10 hours a day of radio transmission.

Dr. Andras Dancusly, of the Babes-Bolyai University at Cluj, makes roughly the same point for the main Hungarian centre in Transylvania. But both admit that Hungarian culture has suffered,

like all the humanities, from the government's technical education drive. As a minority culture, Hungarian is the most vulnerable. Lack of adequate Hungarian language secondary schooling is considered the critical weakness for those who want to avoid total assimilation into the dominant Romanian culture. They say a culture follows its teenagers.

Growing economic differences are also stirring the sympathy of richer Hungarians for their poorer brethren in Romania. Romanian officials simply explain queues as the result of low prices, but two-mile lines of cars queuing for petrol can still be seen here, in Eastern Europe's only major oil producer. This, and a big 1982-83 cut in bus services which turned hitch-hiking into a staple form of transport, have made it harder for Hungarians to travel to Transylvania.

Mr. Gaspar Miklos Tamas, expelled from Romania and considered a dissident in Budapest for his outspoken comments on Transylvania, believes that the broader Hungarian community in Central Europe is now in danger of breaking up. Hungarians are being isolated in Transylvania and assimilated in Slovakia, he says.

The irony is that the Budapest authorities do not disagree with what he says, only with his saying it in public and embarrassing them with fellow Communist governments. That, however, did not stop them suggesting to Mr. Tamas recently that he might like to quit Hungary. Transylvania really is taboo — Financial Times news feature.

Greek Socialists put pressure on NATO for changes

By Bruce Clark
 Reuter

ATHENS — Impatient with a lengthy stalemate in relations with NATO, Greece's ruling Socialists are stepping up pressure for a settlement of outstanding issues with the alliance to which they never wanted to belong.

A row involving Athens, Ankara and NATO command has forced the technical exclusion of all Greek and Turkish forces from the list of troops at the alliance's disposal and Greece says it will stay away from all NATO exercises until the issue is settled.

The dispute flared after Greece included its forces on the Aegean island of Lemnos, which Turkey wants demilitarised, in its annual offer of forces to the alliance. At a Dec. 5 NATO meeting, Turkey vetoed the Greek offer and Greece in turn vetoed Turkey's list of troops available to NATO.

The government of Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu has said it will soon apply a new defence doctrine in line with its belief that the threat to Greece comes from NATO ally Turkey and not from its Communist neighbours to the north.

The ruling Socialists say their long-term goal is to withdraw from NATO. They insist that even if the Lemnos row is settled, Greece will continue boycotting NATO exercises in the Aegean Sea until it is given full operational control of the area.

The Greek navy has taken part in NATO war games outside the Aegean. The boycott of Aegean exercises has been linked specifically with Lemnos.

Turkey says Greece ought to demilitarise the island under the 1923 treaty of Lausanne. Greece counters that this obligation lapses with the 1936 Montreux Treaty.

A conservative government brought Greece back into NATO's military wing in 1980 after a six-year withdrawal in protest at Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus. The Socialists came to power in 1981. Even though they had deep ideological objections to NATO, they continued to offer most of the navy and a significant part of the army for NATO use.

Rows with Turkey over operational control in the Aegean have held up re-integration into NATO of the air force.

This problem and the Lemnos issue have meant that the Rogers agreement bringing Greece back into the military fold has never been fully applied. A NATO command in Larissa, central Greece which the accord foresaw has



Andreas Papandreu

still not been set up.

Opposition to NATO membership was a basic tenet of the PASOK (Socialist) party when it was founded in 1974. PASOK aimed to weaken U.S. influence over Greece which reached its peak under the military junta that ruled the country from 1967 to 1974.

Mr. Papandreu has repeatedly denied the existence of a Communist threat to Greece and complained at NATO's refusal to guarantee Greek borders against Turkey.

At his party's congress in May, he urged the break-up of military blocs in Europe, called the U.S. the "metropolis of imperialism" and praised Moscow's desire for peace.

He has said the government, which is overwhelmingly dependent on the West for arms supplies, does not plan in the immediate future to act on its pledge to pull out of NATO.

Although Mr. Papandreu said last year that participation in NATO's military wing had effectively lapsed, Athens still takes part in major alliance projects like the establishment in western Greece of an AWACS airborne radar system.

The government has discreetly urged NATO to help fortify Greek islands against a possible Soviet incursion from the Black Sea.

A major NATO missile firing range is on the island of Crete and there are NATO early warning systems all over Greece.

These areas of continued cooperation are rarely mentioned in the press.

The policy changes have been criticised by conservatives, who say a defence based purely on a Turkish threat is inconsistent with NATO membership, and by the Communist Party which advocates total withdrawal from the alliance.

Turmoil in Beirut threatens traditions of AUB

By John Kohut
Reuter

BEIRUT — The American University of Beirut (AUB) has long been one of the freest and most influential universities in the Arab World, but political and religious turmoil are jeopardising its tradition of academic tolerance.

Faculty officials and students say prolonged sectarian tension has limited the freedom of expression which gave AUB a reputation as an island of tolerance.

"No student dares say, as Nietzsche did, that God is dead because that student would be dead," said a faculty member on the west Beirut campus overlooking the Mediterranean.

Right-Wing Christian Falangists dominated student activities after Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon until last February, when Muslim militias took over

west Beirut and gained a hold on AUB campus life.

Campus tension, which erupted in violent incidents before February, has eased recently. But faculty members and students say AUB's new American president, Calvin Plimpton, will have to work hard to resolve sectarian conflicts and restore morale.

Mr. Plimpton, a medical doctor and former chairman of Amherst College in the United States, took up his post this month, succeeding Malcolm Kerr whose campus assassination in January was claimed by the "Islamic Jihad" (holy war) group.

Mr. Kerr's predecessor, David Dodge, was kidnapped on campus in 1982 and held for a year by an unidentified group.

Students and faculty members say Mr. Plimpton's presence is much needed, as only a non-Lebanese can free himself from

local politics to concentrate on restoring the university's prestige.

"They think an American can tolerate this situation and stand up to all the splinter groups," Mr. Plimpton said in Washington last month.

AUB was founded in 1866 by American missionaries. Originally called the Syrian Protestant College, it changed its name to the American University of Beirut in 1920.

As a sign of its stature, AUB boasts that 19 of the signatories of the U.N. Charter in 1945 were its graduates. Alumni include presidents, government ministers and scholars.

Foreign enrolment has dropped from nearly 50 per cent to 16 per cent since civil war began in 1975 and AUB has not replaced many foreign teachers who have left the country.

Many fear AUB is losing con-

tacts which helped it keep abreast of research abroad and has turned in on itself, caught up in sectarian disputes contrary to all it stands for.

"Our job is to study, attend classes and not interfere in anything political," said a Christian student. "We are learning democratic principles through negative example."

"Almost every class and club has someone who says they represent the (Shi'ite Muslim) Amal Movement," said a Sunni Muslim student. "If they say we should strike for some cause, there is no debate — the university is on strike." Amal has the strongest militia in west Beirut.

Many Christian students, fearful of becoming targets of militants on the west Beirut campus, refuse to cross from Christian east Beirut where an off-campus programme has been established

since 1975.

Enrolment at the east Beirut campus, first set up for students unable to reach the west because of fighting on the "Green Line" battlefield, has risen to 880 from 345 in 1982.

Of the 3,900 students in the west, over 60 per cent are Muslim compared with an even Muslim-Christian split before 1983.

Ali Husayni, a graduate student who heads Amal's education office, denies his movement controls campus life and says it asks only for more Muslim representation.

"Over 85 per cent of the faculty are Christians. If a vacancy comes up, Muslims are not given a fair chance to apply," he told Reuters.

"I don't want anyone to control the administration, only to cancel out sectarianism."

Students and faculty say the physical and ideological split has

made AUB a centre of polemics rather than debate.

Many objected last month when a Sunni fundamentalist cleric, speaking on campus, accused AUB of "graduating enemies of the (Islamic) nation" and called its professors U.S. spies.

While AUB was committed to being a forum for all views, many Christians and Muslims said they resented a statement which heightened tension and to which no one dared reply.

Adnan Iskandar, professor of political studies, said that considering the strife in Lebanon his class discussions were surprisingly free.

But he avoids sensitive topics "because when people have been killing each other over these things, you can't always expect students' normal tolerance to control their emotions."

Thoughts for Christmas

By The Reverend Moussa Adeli

THERE IS so much to be rejoiced over at this Christmas time. Such a feast often brings the very best out in us. We forget ourselves and think of others, for we find it difficult to be selfish in the face of such an unbelievable event — God himself taking flesh and coming among us. Rightly we rejoice and yet for some who carry heavy burdens rejoicing must seem unreal. Severe suffering has the power to numb the mind and soul. Just take one example. An old man forced out of Palestine by the occupation now lives in Jordan. His only son on the West Bank is dangerously ill. It is Christmas time. He tries to cross the bridge. Kept waiting the whole day, he is turned away at nightfall. No reasons given. The second day the same. On the third day he is allowed to cross. His son is already dead. He sits down and weeps, using the only power which has been left to him — tears. All around him, trees, turkeys find their way into Christian homes

and from almost every tape recorder comes the strains of familiar carols. "Peace and Joy and Goodwill to all men!"

One cannot make sense of such situations — and there are so many and all happening in the land where Mary carried the Light of the World within her, bringing him forth for our sakes and later landing him over into the hard unfeeling hands of men and seeing him broken. And yet it is in the breaking and the subsequent triumph of resurrection that the birth finds its meaning.

My message today for all those who suffer is this: Do not turn away from the Joy of Christmas thinking it has nothing to say to you. Draw near to the child who is the centre of it all. He welcomes you — welcome him in return. In doing this you will find that in spite of all the burdens you carry, your heart will be filled with a great gift, that of joy, peace and hope and that upsurge of courage for the future that he comes to bring. GOD BLESS YOU.

Free Christmas calls cheer poverty stricken

By Robert Knight
Reuter

FORT WAYNE, Indiana — His cheeks wet with tears of joy, an old man replaced the phone after talking to the sister he had not spoken to for 20 years.

He was one of several thousand elderly residents of this area who were allowed free Christmas telephone calls to friends and family scattered across the country.

People who barely had enough money to make a local call were able to speak at length to whomever they wished.

Free calls provided by businesses and social service agencies have become a yuletide tradition in many parts of the United States.

The Fort Wayne programme, however, may be unique in that it places the service in the neighbourhoods where the elderly and infirm live rather than requiring them to come to the sponsor's offices, organisers said.

The old man who spoke to his sister "literally had no financial means of support and what he did have he spent on alcohol — he

couldn't face his desolate situation," said Carol Clark, director of the Allen County Senior Citizens' Centres.

"He called his sister in Pennsylvania. He hadn't talked with her in 20 years. He wept with gratefulness after he found out she still loved him anyway," she said.

TME programme is in its fourth year and the company expects more than 6,000 people will make free calls on four telephones installed at each centre. No time limit is placed on the calls and last year one ran for nearly 40 minutes.

"I know there are other companies that make their phones available to people over the holidays, but as far as I know we're the only ones who make them available out in the community, instead of forcing people to come to our offices," Ladonna Huntley, director of community relations at Lincoln National, told Reuters.

"That makes it easier, especially for people who have a hard time getting around," she said.

Last year participants ran up \$4,000 worth of calls.

At the East Wayne Street Cen-

tre, which serves Fort Wayne's central city, Catherine Moore described what a free call meant to her: "I got to talk to a cousin in Canton, Ohio, who is blind and in ill health. She was so happy to hear my voice. She is so alone and lonely, especially at this time of year."

Aliese Davis added: "Most everybody hates to get old, but this makes me proud to be old. I thank the Lord God they have been so nice to us old people."

Tom Katamis, administrator of the Irene Byron health centre near Fort Wayne said: "When you mention the programme for the first time, many people are afraid they're going to be billed for it later. You can't imagine the looks on their faces after we assure them it's free."

"People are talking to people who they haven't talked to in years. They don't send Christmas cards any more because of limited funds."

'Silent Night' originated in Austrian village

By Peter Humphrey
Reuter

HALLEIN, Austria — No great poet wrote the words, no maestro composed the tune and no celebrated singers graced its first rendition in December 1818.

But the simple Austrian village hymn known in English as "Silent Night" is heard around the world every Christmas in scores of languages from German to Japanese and Swahili.

It happened by chance. Josef Mohr, priest of St. Nikolai Church here, handed organist Franz Xaver Gruber the poem he had written on Christmas Eve and asked him to compose a melody for two solo voices and a choir with guitar accompaniment.

On that same Dec. 24 Mr. Gruber produced the renowned carol whose serenity fills Christian souls everywhere be it in majestic cathedrals, cruise ships, snow-covered huts, or far-flung missionary stations in tropical Africa.

The carol spread from Hallein, in Salzburg Province, to Innsbruck, capital of the Tyrol, and from there to Germany and the United States mistaken as a Tyrolean folksong.

Mr. Gruber's modest tomb and the performance of "Silent Night" in the parish with the original guitar every Christmas Eve draw

thousands of pilgrims to this salt mining settlement.

The carol was written for two solo voices and guitar due to a misfortune, according to local museum accounts.

Just before Christmas in 1818 the dilapidated church organ broke down and weeks would have passed before an organ builder could come from the neighbouring Tyrol to repair it.

So Brother Mohr strummed his guitar and sang the high notes, while Mr. Gruber sang the low, and a four-part mixed choir repeated the last four bars. They won loud applause from the congregation.

The original manuscript was lost and the hymn underwent many changes and embellishments in subsequent years, not least in its many translations.

Paris celebrates centenary of 'Independents'

By Raymond Paccari

ONE HUNDRED years ago, a group of painters outside the consideration of juries who were the law in matters of pictorial art at that time, decided in their turn to form a "Salon" with the name of "Salon des Independants", outside the official "Salon" which was the true state institution which saw itself as the vigilant guardian of tradition. No boldness, no fantasy, no innovation in form or colour had been tolerated until then. Neither was political opinion, and that is why Daumier, the republican, Courbet, the anarchist and Delacroix, the painter of popular revolutions in Paris were excluded from the official "Salon".

Having one's work refused by the "Salon" was not just an official affront for the painter, or an offending disdain for his paintings. It also involved a serious loss, and being accepted or refused at the "Salon" was for the painter a question of life or death, as the State was the painter's chief customer. It was at this time that several painters, with prestigious names, but unknown at that time, such as Seurat, Van Gogh, Matisse and Derain, ignoring the official pomp of exhibitions and inaugurations, decided to create their own salon, which was then with derision called the "Salon des Refuses" (the salon of the refused). A salon installed in huts, in the heart of Paris, where "unknown men and madmen who call themselves 'impressionists', and partisans of the 'Commune' uprising who should be shot", as they were presented by the press, exhibited their paintings. These "unknown", these "madmen" were called Monet, Pissarro, Cezanne, Degas and Renoir. An art-lover, who disregarded official and popular taste and who wanted to help penniless artists, could have acquired for just a few banknotes of the period, a "Landscape" by Van Gogh, a "Still Life" by Monet or a "Portrait of la Goulue" by Toulouse-Lautrec, paintings which today would make millionaires of their heirs. The new salon, created under the auspices of the Society

of Independent Artists founded by Seurat and Signac, with the passing of years finished by attainable recognition. In 1904, Van Dongen exhibited six paintings there, without any reaction on the part of critics. The following year was devoted to a retrospective of Van Gogh and Seurat. Then in 1907, the avant-garde of the "Independents", Derain, Dufy, Matisse, Marquet, Rouault, Vlaminck arrived in force, preceding Braque and a little later the Douanier Rousseau, all representing the great schools of Fauvism and Expressionism. Cubism was to follow in 1911 with Picasso, directly inspired by Cezanne. Surrealism followed next. In short, it can be said that all the greatest pictorial revolutions of the 20th century saw the light of day at the Salon des Independants, which celebrated its centenary from April 8 to May 2, 1984 at the Grand Palais in Paris.

Certainly, if one can admire, at this exceptional exhibition, masterpieces by Cezanne (l'Homme au gilet rouge), by Van Gogh

(l'Italienne), by Seurat or by Braque (l'Estaque), lent by museums and collectors in France and abroad, one can also be surprised, disappointed, amused, sceptical or completely allergic to certain paintings exhibited by "unknown men" or "madmen" of modern art. But, in a general way, the comfort which one cannot help drawing from the first centenary of the Independents, is that beauty and ideas, whatever their means, their place and the form of expression, always end up being recognised, when they are born of talent, not to say genius. If Mao is generally a little behind the times in art, fortunate initiatives such as the exhibition at the Grand Palais are there for the express purpose of filling in the gap and serving for the prestige of this "institution" for toothless old men and decorated painters" which, according to Salvador Dali, the Salon des Independants was. The famous surrealist painter, in whom such an opinion is quite surprising, has this time visibly made a mistake — Radio France Internationale.

Christmas in the Big Apple: A down-and-out finds something edible in a Fifth Avenue litter bin. There are 36,000 homeless people in New York (Guardian photo)



Age, sex and smoking all affect sense of smell

By Boyce Rensberger

WASHINGTON — The first systematic testing of the ability to detect odors shows that in general, the sense of smell is better in women than in men, in non-smokers than in smokers and in young adults than in the elderly.

The last of these "is the really important finding," Richard L. Doty, a specialist in disorders of the sense of smell who directed the study, said in an interview. "A great many of our elderly have lost

much of their ability to smell. In fact, a great many can't smell at all."

Mr. Doty's research at the University of Pennsylvania involved 1,955 volunteers ranging in age from 5 to 99 and tests of 40 chemically simulated scents, including cinnamon, cherry, pizza, gasoline, tobacco, mint, soap, grass, lemon, motor oil and root beer.

Mr. Doty found that a person's olfactory ability is usually at its best between the ages of 20 and

40. The study suggests that among people between the ages of 65 and 80, about 60 per cent have severe losses in the sense of smell and about one-fourth have lost all ability to smell.

Among those over 80, the proportion with a severe loss was 80 per cent. Nearly half could not smell anything.

At all ages, females scored higher than males. Middle-aged women scored about five per cent higher; women over 65 scored 10

per cent to 15 per cent higher. In other words, as women grow older they lose less of their smelling ability than do men of the same ages.

Mr. Doty said that the female superiority also showed up when the test was used in Japan and within various racial groups in the United States.

Smokers at all ages scored lower than nonsmokers, confirming the belief that smoke damages nerve endings in the nose.

— Washington Post.

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N. Yemen on threshold of oil exporting age

SANAA (R) — After decades of dependence on foreign aid and remittances from workers abroad, North Yemen is suddenly on the threshold of an oil age which will bring the Red Sea country unexpected wealth.

Yemen Hunt Oil, a subsidiary of the U.S. Hunt Oil Company, struck oil in the far east of North Yemen this summer, and there is no longer any doubt that the reserves are enough to make production for export a commercial proposition.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh confirmed this in an interview with American journalists recently, saying that the oil could be shipped out from the Red Sea coast within two years.

Hunt Oil general manager in Sanaa, Mr. William Furr, has declined to give details of the company's latest activities, but oil sources close to the company say the executives there are "all smiles".

Not even Hunt know exactly how much oil there is in their Alef field since the company has drilled so far only three of the 14 wells needed to delineate the perimeter precisely.

But diplomats in the North Yemen capital say they are telling their governments to expect exports of 200,000 barrels a day by the end of the 1980s.

Exports at that level would have a dramatic effect on the financial position of the government, which expects to receive about 6,200 million riyals (\$960 million) in revenue next year.

The government holds a 51 per cent share in the Hunt concession, which was granted in 1981. It covers 12,600 square kilometres around Marib, an ancient capital of Yemen and site of a dam which supported a large population until it broke in the sixth century A.D.

The government-controlled press has been keeping quiet about Hunt's discoveries, apparently to prevent the expectations of the country's six million people from rising too rapidly.

North Yemen also wants to prevent too many of its 1.5 million workers abroad returning too quickly. They send home about \$1.2 billion a year and provide the country's main source of hard currency.

Yemenis maintain in private that Saudi Arabia, their wealthy and overbearing neighbour, is furious at their good fortune. But President Saleh dismissed such talks, saying the Saudis had in fact congratulated him on the oil discoveries.

Saudi Arabia is North Yemen's main aid donor, with budgetary aid alone estimated at over \$100 million.

The Alef field lies close to the borders with both Saudi Arabia and South Yemen, in an area where local tribesmen have often challenged the authority of the Sanaa government.

But Hunt are said to be relaxed about the security of the field and the authorities are thought to be strong enough to ensure the safety of the installations, which lie in easily defensible open desert.

A Soviet team working on the South Yemen side of the border found traces of oil at Shabwa, raising the prospect of the Alef field extending over the border. In this case the two countries would have to agree on how to divide it.

Oil sources in Sanaa said the most likely route for a pipeline would be through the town of Dhammar, south of Sanaa, and along a new road to the Red Sea port of Salaf, 400 kilometres away.

Hunt has signed agreements with a group of South Korean companies, apparently in connection with the pipeline, the oil sources said.

Soviet Union eyes Chinese economic reforms

PEKING (R) — The Soviet Union, battling serious economic problems, criticises Peking for its unorthodox economic reforms but is showing a discreet interest in their success and how the reforms are applied.

Peking has chalked up an impressive list of record harvests since relaxing Marxist economic policies in the countryside five years ago and is now preparing to apply similar reforms to industry.

China's new methods, based largely on cash incentives for workers and a reduction of state control over the economy, have proved to be more effective than the Soviet-style centrally-planned economy which stifled growth for 30 years.

The orthodox Marxists in the Kremlin have accused China of undermining communist ideology and have warned that the reforms will lead to inflation and unemployment.

But China, happy at the rapid growth in its agriculture and industry since the reforms began, has replied by warning that the Soviet economy will never succeed unless it adopts the Chinese model.

Western political economists rule out any direct transplant of the Chinese reforms in the Soviet Union, but they say that Moscow is showing interest in spite of its rhetoric.

Soviet leaders fear that if they went as fast with economic reform as Peking, the heterogeneous nature of Soviet society with its many different races could make political control during the process impossible, the diplomats said.

"In their heart of hearts, they know that what the Chinese are doing now they will have to do in some way sooner or later," one diplomat said.

Significant visit

The latest example of Moscow's quiet interest is the visit of Soviet First Deputy Premier Ivan Arkhipov.

Mr. Arkhipov has brought with him to Peking the most powerful Soviet economic and trade delegation since the two communist powers fell out in a bitter ideological dispute 20 years ago.

He has already agreed with his Chinese hosts on a major long-term trade pact and more economic and scientific contacts.

His itinerary in China is significant.

Diplomats say it is no coincidence that the Soviet delegation will visit some pioneering centres of Chinese urban reform such as the bustling southern city of Canton, dubbed by the Chinese media as the "future vision of China", and the central town of Wuhan, which has also been used as a testing ground for reforms.

He will go to the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone (SEZ), the first area to be given wide-ranging powers to attract Western capitalist investment.

Workers there are paid according to output, and factories produce what the customer wants, not what the state says, the anti-theory of orthodox Marxist economics.

A Kremlin concern is that many of China's reforms have been taken straight off the drawing board of Hungary's current economic experiment, where free from the watchful eye of Moscow, they have been developed further.

The New China News Agency during Mr. Arkhipov's visit printed a lengthy analysis from its Moscow correspondent on the future of the Soviet economy.

It referred favourably to Moscow's recent small experiments in loosening up its rigid controls on industry.

However the report said, "all these measures, though useful in the short-term, cannot solve the problems that have affected economic growth of the Soviet Union for many years."

"The central issue decisive to future Soviet economic development remains: How to speed up scientific and technological progress and reforms its management system so as to get the national economy on the right course," it said.

Polish bank keeps E. European foothold in Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — A Polish bank run from Warsaw is still operating quietly in Tel Aviv's business district 17 years after Israel and Poland broke off diplomatic relations.

Polka Kasa Opiwci (PKO) does not offer its 2,000 Israeli clients bank cards or cash dispensing machines. Its grey stone exterior and equally drab interior have none of the chrome glitter of Israeli banks.

The commercial bank, founded in Poland in 1929, gives elderly Polish-speaking customers a taste of the old country in the Middle East. They can cash their cheques at the "kasa", or cashier, and purchase shares on the Tel Aviv stock exchange at the "papierowy wartosciowy" counter.

Aside from the Romanian embassy and airline, PKO is the only non-religious Eastern European foothold in Israel.

In 1933 during the British mandate of Palestine, the bank opened its branch on tree-lined Allenby street, aiming to attract business from Polish immigrants, says Mr. Wlodzimierz Menes, 72, assistant manager of PKO Tel Aviv.

PKO maintains only two other overseas branches, in Paris and Buenos Aires, which both have large Polish emigre communities.

Warsaw followed Moscow and other Eastern European governments by pulling its embassy out of Israel when the 1967 Middle East war broke out. The bank stayed.

"The way I understand it, Poland believed things would return to normal," Mr. Menes said. "If there is a resumption of ties, we have connections ... and a list of people ready to do business with Poland. All it will take is a green light and we can begin in earnest tomorrow."

Israel has called for renewed ties with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union but there is no sign relations will be resumed.

"Right now, there is no trade with Poland and very limited deals with Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Yugoslavia ... some arranged through other countries like Switzerland or Britain," Mr. Menes said.

The Polish bank has turned to the local market, offering a full line of commercial services which include dollar-linked shekel accounts, providing protection from Israel's 800 per cent annual inflation.

PKO once did booming business with left-wing Israeli kibbutzim, or collective farming settlements but they have since moved their accounts to larger Israeli banks.

About 156,000 Jews came to Israel from Poland after World War II. As only a handful of the country's three-million-strong Jewish community survived, most Polish-born Israelis no longer have relatives there — but some funds are still sent to Poland from the Jewish state.

"Today most of the funds transferred through us are sent to Poles from Jews whom they hid (from the Nazis) during the war," Mr. Menes said. "There is a \$150 a year limit but in Poland that's a lot of money."

Modest but steady profit

PKO is the only completely foreign-owned bank in Israel and the Tel Aviv branch earns a modest but steady profit.

The bank's most loyal customers include some ultra-orthodox Jews, forbidden by ritual law to claim interest on their money from fellow Jews.

"So they bank with us because we are regarded as Christians," said Mr. Menes.

1985 may be dollar's peak year

NEW YORK (R) — Many currency analysts believe 1985 could be the year of the dollar's long-awaited decline.

The value of the dollar against other major currencies has risen relentlessly over the past four years.

Warnings that it was overvalued have been ignored repeatedly by investors, and past predictions by analysts that "the bubble's got to burst this year" have all proved false.

Even for 1985 most analysts expect the dollar to hit historic highs against the German mark and the pound sterling before mid-year. It is only in the second half of 1985 that analysts see a steady decline setting in.

The main factor weighing in analysts' predictions for a dollar fall in 1985 is the size of the U.S. current account payments deficit with the rest of the world.

"Sooner or later the \$100 billion-plus addition to foreign dollar holdings implied by the U.S. current account deficit will saturate overseas demand for dollar assets," Chase Econometrics said in a recent economic profile.

Last year a \$100 billion U.S. current account deficit in 1984 was just a forecast. But it proved correct.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige predicts it will be even higher at \$130 billion in 1985.

He is one member of the administration who is getting worried about the impact of the high dollar on U.S. exports.

The New York Times in a recent editorial described the dollar's strength as "weakness".

"The value of the dollar needs to be brought down, prudently," the paper said.

Mr. Ron Liesching, economist at Chase Manhattan capital markets group, said: "The dollar is probably past its cyclical peak and could easily drop through 2.50 marks next year."

The dollar reached an 11-1/2 year high of 3.17 marks in late September, more than 16 per cent higher than its 1983 closing rate of about 2.73 marks.

But in the early part of 1985, the dollar could bounce higher on renewed growth in the U.S. economy and firmer interest rates after a sluggish performance in the latter half of 1984.

About 60 per cent of foreign exchange managers at 50 U.S. multinational companies polled by BankAmerica International predict the dollar will rise in the first quarter, with two-thirds expecting an advance to 3.20 to 3.25 marks.

The dollar is currently trading around 3.10 marks.

The view that interest rates could firm boosting the value of the dollar on world currency markets in the first three months was backed by Mr. Barry Wainstein, chief corporate dealer at BankAmerica International.

Over the past year some economists and policymakers have expressed fears that investors could take fright at the massive U.S. current account or the federal budget deficit and rush to sell dollars — destabilising the world's financial system.

But most analysts do not expect this.

"If the money doesn't flow into the U.S., where else does it go?" said Mr. David Palmer, senior vice president of First American Bank of New York.

The yen has often been tipped as the major beneficiary of a dollar decline due to the Japanese economy's strength. But relatively higher returns on U.S.-dollar denominated investments could still keep the dollar firm against the yen next year.

Despite Japan's widely publicised trade surplus with the rest of the world, capital continues to flow out of the country.

Japan's long-term capital account deficit in calendar 1984 is expected to exceed \$40 billion against a record \$17.7 billion deficit in 1983.

Similarly, none of the major European currencies stands out as particularly attractive alternatives to the dollar.

European economic growth and interest rates are closely tied to developments in the United States, most analysts said.

"When the U.S. economy weakens, Europe loses its locomotive," Mr. Tom Campbell, New York-based foreign exchange marketing manager at First National Bank of Chicago, said.

However, Chase's Liesching warned: "The U.S. may be the lone locomotive of the world economy but it can't remain that way for much longer."

West German analysts said the mark stands to gain if the dollar becomes less attractive due to falling U.S. interest rates, but any advances will be restrained by likely cuts in domestic rates.

Analysts in London said the pound sterling, which fell to a record low of \$1.62 recently, would remain vulnerable in 1985 due to the continuing popularity of the dollar, shaky world oil prices and industrial unrest in Britain exemplified by the nine-month-old coalminers strike.

A recent survey of 45 economists by Euromoney magazine showed an average forecast of a modest appreciation in sterling's value to about \$1.30 by the end of 1985.

Cartel trial of Israeli bank chiefs to continue

TEL AVIV (R) — An Israeli court ruled Monday that the heads of Israel's four largest banks must stand trial on charges that they formed a cartel to reduce interest rates on negotiable certificates of deposit.

Judge Avigdor Salton of the Tel Aviv district court rejected a motion by Bank Hapoalim and the United Mizrahi Bank to dismiss the charges brought by the government.

Chief executives Mr. Ernst Japhet of Bank Leumi, Mr. Giora Gazit of Bank Hapoalim, Mr. Eli Cohen of the Israel Discount Bank and Mr. Aharon Meir of the United Mizrahi Bank face a maximum sentence of eight months in jail if found guilty.

The trade restrictions department of the ministry of industry and trade charged the bank heads and their respective institutions with forming a cartel last year to cut interest rates paid on the certificates.

According to the indictment, the four met in June, 1983, and agreed to bring interest down from 120 per cent annum to 85 per cent.

Further meetings were alleged to have resulted in rate rises to 93 per cent and 103 per cent.

On Dec. 11, lawyers for the chief executives of Bank Leumi and the Israel Discount Bank entered pleas of not guilty.

Bank Hapoalim and the United Mizrahi Bank asked the court to dismiss the charges, contending the indictment was unclear.

After Monday's ruling, Bank Hapoalim and the United Mizrahi Bank also pleaded not guilty.

The trial was recessed until March.

Caracas stresses importance of OPEC's role in oil market

CARACAS (R) — OPEC's future and the stabilisation of the oil market depends on members adopting an effective production and price pooling mechanism, Venezuelan Energy and Mines Minister Arturo Hernandez Grisanti said Sunday.

"OPEC would take a historic step backwards by renouncing the use of its influence on the market," Mr. Hernandez Grisanti told a press conference.

He said approval of a plan setting up a body to ensure members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) respected production and pricing policies would have an important psychological effect.

"Prices would rise the next day," he added.

The proposal, made by Venezuela, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, will be discussed at an OPEC meeting in Geneva on Thursday.

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, DEC. 25, 1984

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A very merry Christmas to you. This is a meaningful day full of love and affectionate feelings. It is a day to cement personal relationships and for worthwhile activities.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) You will very likely get your finest wishes today or you may have to go after them. Try to see as many persons as you can.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Show affection for those you love and live your particular philosophy of life today and you enjoy others more.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Show that you comprehend the finest principles and tenets which this day is supposed to denote.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) You have very good bunches about how to make this a delightful day between yourself and the one you love the most.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) You understand the desires of others and should give them the backing they need. Be happy.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Concentrate on what can be done for others, especially those who are not so fortunate as you. Spread cheer everywhere.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You are full of the holiday spirit and can be much happier, both at home and with friends and relatives.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Focus your attention on your home and family and be happy there. Make plans for the New Year ahead.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Be sure to communicate with everyone possible today and get good results. Say memorable things to those you love.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) While celebrating, be sure to think about practical affairs and how to make the future brighter. This next year will be better for you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Much happiness can be yours today, and you should show appreciation for the many kind thoughts from others.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) A day for meditation that can bring you greater peace and happiness. Your Mate can be very devoted now and bring you solace.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she will be a New Age product and should go to modern schools where the latest technology is taught and will then be well equipped to achieve great success. Do not deter from expressing different traits from the norm, since it is from this that success will come.

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, DEC. 26, 1984

GENERAL TENDENCIES: After early morning clean-up, it is an excellent day for continuing with as much constructive activity as possible and for expressing your finest talents.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Morning is fine for making collections and paying bills, but later be with charming persons and make fine, new plans.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Make sure you keep a promise to another in the morning. Then contact those persons who can help you in civic affairs, and make the future bright.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Early handle your work load efficiently and then plan how to get your finest talents working more profitably.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Early handle obligations connected with yesterday's fun and then study into more up-to-date methods for the days ahead.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Get the situation at home straightened out before you meet with a partner and talk over new methods for getting ahead faster.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) You have delayed where some communication is concerned, so handle that first of all. Be wise.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Pay only bills that are pressing and forget making any new investments today, and later you can be with congenials for recreation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Be more thoughtful of your family today and carry on with yesterday's interesting activities.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Some secret irritation should be taken care of early, then handle practical affairs wisely and get your points across.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Don't permit a pal to take up your time in the morning when you want to plan the future more intelligently.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Avoid a higher-up who may be irritated and want a whipping boy and carry through with what you have in mind.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Study your own wishes in the morning, and then contact the persons who can be most helpful to you in gaining them.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she is apt to be a little slow at learning in school early in life, but be patient since your progeny will retain more knowledge than others thusly. Upon reaching adulthood, a great potential for brilliance and high success arises. A great appreciation for music here.

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

"Which new phone service do we want to subscribe to? How about jungle drums?"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SCAIB
ACCOO
HIPLAC
ZEERIF

Always makes me nervous

IT'S "SAID" TO BE A TEST.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: "O O O O O O O O O O"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: DITTO WHEAT TRICKY HALLOW
Answer: How children arrive at your door tonight—EVERY "WITCH" WAY

Peanuts

NEVER CATCH A FISH WHILE HE'S DOING AEROBICS...

Mutt 'n' Jeff

Merry Christmas

Andy Capp

NOTHING SERIOUS, FLO. HE NEEDS A TONIC....

TELL HIM THERE'S A NEW BARMAID AT THE 'STAR AND GARTER'

THEY'VE GOT TRAINED MINDS

Reagan stands firm on 'Star Wars' programme

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President Reagan is standing firmly behind his "Star Wars" programme, refusing to scale down the project or trade space weapons for Soviet concessions at next month's Geneva arms control talks.

Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger, in a television interview Sunday, said Reagan would not shelve development of a space-based anti-missile defence system as Moscow has urged.

"We will not give that up," Mr. Weinberger said. "It's designed to destroy incoming missiles before they get to a target... it offers the most hope (of averting nuclear war) of anything that I think has been proposed in this whole field."

He added, however, that "we will certainly discuss it in the context of offensive and defensive systems" at the Jan. 7 and 8 talks between Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko.

But Mr. Weinberger said the

administration had no plans to use space weapons as a bargaining chip at the Geneva talks in return for a Soviet weapons cut.

He also denied that Mr. Reagan was planning to scale down the goals of his strategic defence initiative, as the space weapons programme is officially known.

The New York Times Sunday quoted administration officials as saying the programme was being downgraded from a shield against all enemy missiles to a means of protecting only America's land-based nuclear arsenal.

Mr. Reagan, returning to Washington Sunday from a weekend at the Camp David presidential retreat, shrugged off the reports, telling reporters: "It isn't going to

protect missiles, it's going to destroy missiles."

The president's five-year, \$26 billion programme is aimed at developing a space-based system capable of destroying Soviet missiles in flight.

Meanwhile in Moscow a Soviet commentator said Monday that the forthcoming U.S.-Soviet arms talks in Geneva should be a "major landmark" of the new year, but warned there could be little progress in limiting weapons, if the arms race reaches space.

"In present-day conditions, Moscow believes, it is particularly important to prevent the arms race from spreading to space," Edgar Chepurov wrote for the No. 2 government news agency Novosti.

"If this is not achieved, it will be unrealistic to hope for putting an end to the arms race."

Similar warnings have sounded from the Kremlin since the Jan. 7-8 talks between Mr. Shultz and

Mr. Gromyko were announced last month.

Soviet officials and media statements have stressed that Moscow wants a quick ban on space weapons to result from either the Shultz-Gromyko talks or any negotiations ensuing from that meeting.

Mr. Chepurov noted, as other Soviet commentators have done in recent weeks, that the "Star Wars" space weapons envisaged by Mr. Reagan are opposed in Western Europe but denied that Moscow had done anything to fuel this opposition.

He said the "U.S. military space programme threatens the security of Western Europe and all mankind."

The Geneva talks, he added, "are called upon to become a major landmark of the incoming year 1985" and added "the Soviet Union is entering into the new dialogue with good and constructive intentions."

Jayewardene sacks senior minister

COLOMBO (R) — President Junius Jayewardene Monday sacked a senior cabinet minister who opposed his proposals for a political solution to Sri Lanka's racial unrest.

Official sources had earlier said Industries and Scientific Affairs Minister Cyril Mathew resigned.

Mr. Mathew, who is also president of a powerful trade union, had sent a note to ministers, mem-

bers of parliament and others in which he criticised government proposals aimed at ending unrest between majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils.

Mr. Jayewardene said in a letter to Mr. Mathew Monday that his criticisms violated the rules and conventions of the cabinet.

"I presume you have decided to cease to be one of my ministers,"

said the letter, which was released to the press.

The president appointed his deputy, Denzil Fernando, as industries and scientific affairs minister.

Mr. Mathew, a strong opponent of the Tamils, said the proposals would make the Sinhalese "dispossessed in the only land they have to live in."

S. Africa accuses world of interfering

PRETORIA (R) — President P.W. Botha said Monday that South Africa was on the threshold of an era of peace and prosperity but he accused the world of interfering with his country to hide its own problems.

"South Africa must continuously take into account a world community which wants to hide so many of its own problems and shortcomings behind a calculated campaign against our country and its people," he said in a televised Christmas message.

"The government will use every means at its disposal to prevent interference in our domestic affairs by forces from outside," Mr. Botha said.

Referring to a new constitution which for the first time grants a junior role in the white government to Indians and Coloureds (people of mixed race) but excludes the black majority, Mr. Botha said 1984 would be recorded in history as the year of "meaningful constitutional development."

Opponents of the government have condemned the constitution as a sham, saying that the apartheid racial separation system is still in place. Blacks are still being stripped of their South African citizenship and dumped in tribal "homelands."

Mr. Botha blamed radicals for provoking riots in black townships in which some 170 people were killed, most of them shot by the security forces. He praised the army and the police for maintaining internal and external security.

Prisoners to be freed

Eighty-five long-term South African prisoners, two of them jailed for endangering state security, will be freed under a Christmas amnesty decided by President P.W. Botha, the Prisons Department announced Monday.

The two, regarded as political prisoners by government opponents, are 78 and 76 years old and have already served most of their sentences.

The others, all over 65 years of age, were jailed for offences ranging from theft to homicide. Names have not been published.

The two security prisoners are among 44 people to be released by the end of the year. A further 41 long-term prisoners will be freed over the next few years.

This is the first such amnesty since 1981.

Bangladesh police attacked over student death

DHAKA (R) — A university administrator Monday protested against the death of a student leader who was shot by police during a 48-hour national anti-government strike which left Bangladesh paralysed over the weekend.

M.A. Rakib, vice chancellor of Rajshahi University, protested against what he described as police excesses during the strike. He also demanded "exemplary punishment" for those responsible for the deaths of the student and another person on Saturday.

Students at Rajshahi and at two other universities were evacuated from their campuses to ease tension over the strike, called by opposition groups to force President Hossain Muhammad Ershad to end martial law and restore democracy.

The strike was staged in defiance of a two-day ban on all political activities which ended this morning.

The country's two main opposition alliances headed by Sheikh Hasina Wazed and Begum Khaleda Zia described the strike as a turning point in their movement for democracy.

"People have again given their verdict against martial law and military rule. As such Gen. Ershad has no right to cling to power any more," they said in identical statements Monday.

The opposition alliances and other groups were holding meetings in Dhaka and other centres Monday to protest against the two deaths at Rajshahi, which is in northern Bangladesh.



LONG QUEUE: Indians stand in line waiting to vote in the general elections Tuesday. The voting will be over on December 27 (AP wirephoto).

44 killed in S. African bus crash

PORT ELIZABETH, South Africa (AP) — A crowded bus careened off a mountain pass and overturned early Monday, killing 44 black passengers who were returning from Cape Town to the black homeland of Transkei for Christmas, police said.

About 44 other passengers were injured in the crash near Cradock in southern South Africa, said Col. Gerrie Van Rooyen, police spokesman for the Eastern Cape province.

Many victims were pinned for hours beneath the overturned bus, which went off the road at a curve in heavy rain at dawn between Cradock and Graaff-Reinet, the South African Press Association said.

Ambulances, police cars and private cars ferried victims to the Cradock Hospital about 60 kilometres east of the crash site, Van Rooyen said.

Most buses are licensed to carry

no more than 60 sitting passengers and 15 standing riders. Van Rooyen said. He said he did not know the limit for the bus involved in the crash.

Hundreds of thousands of blacks with permits to live in white cities return to their home villages by train, bus and taxi van for the Christmas holidays, often their only visit home in the year. The vehicles often are dangerously overloaded.

U.K. strike to continue during Christmas

LONDON (R) — Miners and management in the British coal industry were still talking tough as the deadlocked strike entered Christmas week — the 42nd week since it started.

Strike leader Arthur Scargill, who plans to spend Tuesday on a picket line, told supporters in his home coalfield in Yorkshire, north England: "This is a Christmas of hope. We are fighting for Christmas to come."

And at the state coal board, plans emerged for a fresh campaign in the coming days to persuade the miners to abandon the strike and return to work.

The two sides have not negotiated directly for almost eight weeks and the continuing stalemate prompted the Anglican

Archbishop of York to call for a new peace initiative.

Archbishop John Habgood said in a radio interview attitudes were still hardening and the strike would cause lasting damage in mining communities.

"I think there is going to have to be a major new effort in the New Year to try to find some sort of basis for reconciliation," he said.

About two-thirds of the country's 189,000 coalminers have been on strike since March 12. They are fighting coal board plans to close 20 loss-making mines and to cut the workforce by 20,000, largely through voluntary redundancies.

They have survived on state welfare payments and subsidies from supporters and other trade

unions. A national appeal raised more than £260,000 (\$430,000) to help their families through Christmas.

The prospect of Christmas without money took its toll on the strike, however, and the board said more than 10,000 returned to work in November to earn special bonuses.

The board, which says it has made its final offer and cannot abandon its right to close pits it feels are exhausted, is now planning a fresh propaganda drive.

It will publish advertisements restating its terms for ending the dispute and aiming to show the strikers their action has no chance of causing coal shortages as stocks remain high.

Vietnamese seize Khmer Rouge base

BANGKOK (R) — The Vietnamese army overran a Khmer Rouge stronghold in Kampuchea near the Thai border last Friday, a Thai officer said Monday.

He said about 800 Khmer Rouge guerrillas and 500 civilians fled across the border into south east Thailand, leaving large quantities of weapons, ammunition

and provisions behind. They have since left Thai territory.

Daily clashes along the perimeter of the huge Ampil Camp in north western Kampuchea have increased concern among the guerrillas that Vietnamese soldiers would soon attack the resistance headquarters there. The camp has about 23,000 civilians.

The Khmer Rouge and two other Kampuchean guerrilla groups are fighting the Vietnamese-backed government from bases along the Thai border.

Vietnam, which has between 160,000 and 180,000 troops in Kampuchea, began a dry-season offensive against the resistance in November.

Gaulists blast government over Kanaks

PARIS (R) — France's right-wing opposition, apparently with an eye to general elections in 1986, has stepped up attacks on the Socialist government over its handling of independence claims by a minority group in New Caledonia.

The simmering political row over the future of the South Pacific territory has sparked increasingly angry exchanges in Paris, with Prime Minister Laurent Fabius accusing the right at the weekend of "pouring oil on the fire."

Mr. Fabius was responding to mounting criticism of attempts by government envoy Edgard Pisani to draft an independence formula acceptable to all communities of New Caledonia.

Mr. Pisani has been given until the end of next month to find a solution to the conflict between indigenous Kanaks seeking ind-

ependence and a majority of white settlers and immigrants who favour continued ties with France.

Charles Pasqua, leader of the opposition RPR Party in the Senate, increased the stakes on Friday by threatening to invoke a rare procedure under which members of the government can be tried by a special high court — implicitly on treason charges.

"It is clear that, against the popular wish, the government wants to impose independence on New Caledonia. Our duty is to fight to keep the territory in the French Republic," Mr. Pasqua said.

"If developments warrant it, we will move towards having those responsible appear before the high court."

The court, comprising 24 judges and 12 members of parliament, is

empowered to try a president or government ministers for high treason or other serious charges.

The last attempt by the RPR to convene the court in a separate dispute in 1983 was rejected by the National Assembly, where the Socialists have a majority.

In a rare closing of conservative ranks, RPR leader Jacques Chirac joined five other former prime ministers and former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in issuing a statement saying the government was undermining the constitution and French interests.

The right-wing has also charged the government with failing to maintain law and order in New Caledonia, where at least 12 people have died in political violence which flared last month when militant Kanaks set up a self-styled provisional government.

Soviet flotilla to take part in joint exercises with Cuba

MIAMI, Florida (AP) — A Soviet naval flotilla was headed for Cuba and was expected to remain in the Caribbean for at least a month to participate in joint military exercises with Cuban forces, a U.S. Navy spokesman said.

Lt. Cmdr. Craig Quigley said the Navy frigate USS Vreeland and two P-3 Orion aircraft were keeping watch on the two guided-missile frigates, a replenishment oiler, a submarine and a guided-missile destroyer which left the Soviet Union in mid-December.

As of midday Sunday, the flotilla was approaching the so-called Mayaguana Passage, a gateway to the Caribbean near the Turks and Caicos Islands in the Bahamas, and about 200 kilometres north of Cuba, Quigley said in a telephone interview from the naval air station in Jacksonville.

Defence Secretary Caspar Wein-

berger said Sunday on ABC television the pentagon would closely monitor the Soviet ships.

Asked if the movement represented anything more than routine manoeuvres, Mr. Weinberger said, "We don't know... that close to the continental United States, of course, we have to keep a very close watch."

Asked if the Soviet flotilla had any bearing on tensions in Central America, Mr. Weinberger replied, "That's what we have to look for. I don't really know."

Quigley and about two dozen reporters flew over the flotilla Sunday aboard navy planes to look closer at the ships, including a Soviet Tango class diesel-electric submarine.

"The ships did not vary their course speed. I'm sure they were taking pictures of us as we were taking pictures of them. It was a low-key event," he said.

He said the navy became aware of the Soviet voyage to the Caribbean — the 24th since 1969 and the second so far this year — through a Dec. 18 article in the Communist Party newspaper Pravda, which said the flotilla would participate in Cuba Liberation Day, the anniversary of Fidel Castro's rise to power in January 1959.

"Historically, they've stayed in the Caribbean 35 days on the average... they've participated in joint naval exercises with the Cuban Navy as well as made port of calls at Havana and Cien Fuegos (on the southern coast of Cuba)," Quigley said.

"We don't see any threat in this deployment. There have been other deployments and there's been no cause for alarm," he said. "We watch them with great interest, not alarm."

The 3,800-ton frigates Zhdorny and Razitelnyy are designed for anti-submarine warfare, he said. Each is about 122 metres long.

The 7,500-ton, 152-metre-long destroyer, the Otichnyy, is developed for anti-surface warfare, he said.

This is the first time a guided-missile destroyer of this class has ever made the trip," Quigley said, explaining the first ship of that class was launched in 1980.

He said he did not know what type of weapons the ships carried. Pravda reported that one of the frigates took off from the Black Sea, while the other vessels came through the North Sea, he said. They met near the Azores Islands, off the west coast of Africa.

Rescue workers seal off burning U.S. coal mine

ORANGEVILLE, Utah (AP) — Workers began sealing a smoke-choked coal mine to extinguish a fire that prevented them from removing the bodies of 25 miners and two others presumed dead from deep inside a mountain.

The crews later stopped the operation and were evacuated because of a buildup of volatile methane gas inside the shaft. About 100 people were evacuated from the Wilberg mine and from two nearby company operated mines — the Des Bee Dove and Deer Creek — when a firefighter inside the Wilberg Mine took the high methane reading, Robert Henrie, a spokesman for Emery Mining Corp., said Sunday afternoon.

"He put on his methane metre and it went sky high, so everyone was evacuated," Henrie said. "We have to be very careful."

Just before the reading was taken, the fire broke through a barrier that had been erected as a firestop, he said.

The crews were evacuated to a company building about 1.6 kilometres away. None of the firefighters, rescue workers or support personnel was reported missing from the tunnel or mine area, Henrie said.

The fire, which broke out Wednesday, is the worst mine disaster in the United States since May 1972, when 91 miners died in a fire in Idaho.

Meanwhile, grieving relatives and friends of the miners sought solace in prayer services throughout central Utah's coal country.

The decision to seal the Wilberg mine with the bodies still inside was made after the fire that trapped 26 men and one woman flared up again early Sunday, driving out rescuers.

"There was no question we had to get the people (rescuers) out of there," said Henrie, whose company operates the mine. "They moved very, very quickly to retreat."

Henrie said state, federal, company and union officials together agreed to seal the mine to choke off the fire so the bodies could be recovered safely. He said it was not known how long the sealing operation would take.

Before the evacuations, crews worked to erect double seals of a synthetic, fireproof, curtain-like material as close to the fire as possible in the mine's main shaft. The mine has no other openings to the outside.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
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PROTECTING A LOSS

Both vulnerable. West deals.

NORTH
♦ A 763
♦ 108
♦ 1064
♦ KQ104

WEST EAST
♦ K102 ♦ Q
♦ AKQ95 ♦ 7642
♦ J97 ♦ 8532
♦ 53 ♦ J976

SOUTH
♦ J9854
♦ J3
♦ AKQ
♦ A82

The bidding:
West North East South
1♥ Pass Pass 1♦
Pass 2♦ Pass 4♦
Pass Pass King of ♡.

Sometimes a technically inferior play could be your only hope. Even if it needs some help from your friends, the opponents.

Although the final contract cannot be faulted, South's method of getting there leaves a great deal to be desired. His hand was far too strong to reopen with a simple suit bid. He should first have doubled to show his strength. Then he would not have felt compelled to jump to game at his next turn to describe his hand.

West cashed two hearts and then shifted to a club. Declarer won in hand and led the jack of spades. West

covered to "make sure" of a trump trick, and great was the fall thereon. Now declarer's only other loser was a trump. Making four odd.

An expert kibitzer remarked that declarer had taken an inferior line. South's play of the jack of spades at trick two would succeed only against a singleton 10 with East and both higher honors with West. He pointed out the technically correct way to handle the suit was to lead to the ace in the hope of finding West with a singleton king or queen — that was twice as likely as hoping East held the singleton 10.

Declarer simply thanked him without even bothering to point out the fallacy of the kibitzer's logic. While it is true, in the abstract, the best way to play this spade combination is to lead low to the ace, that could not succeed here. West was virtually marked with a guarded spade honor, or the king-queen, for his opening bid, so declarer's lead of the jack could not cost. If the suit broke 2-2, it made no difference; if East did hold the singleton 10, it was the winning play. And it had the added advantage that, every now and then, some careless defender would cover from a holding such as West's

COLUMN

Japan seizes record number of handguns

TOKYO (AP) — Police have seized a postwar record 1,702 handguns so far this year, many of them apparently smuggled illegally into Japan, mainly from the Philippines and the United States, Japan's Kyodo News Service reported Sunday. Quoting the national police agency, Kyodo said the number of handguns seized in Nov. 30 was 60 per cent more than in all of 1983 and 138 more than the previous record of 1,564 in all of 1976. In Japan, possession of handguns, except by police or some antique gun collectors, is banned by law, but underworld groups known as "yakuza" (gangsters) have guns. Of the seized handguns, 560 were toy guns remodeled to fire. Kyodo reported.

Thatcher's ancestors were bootmakers

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher comes from a long line of farm labourers, servants, and cobblers, according to genealogists. The grocer's daughter who became Britain's first woman premier also has Irish blood on her father's side from Catherine Selewin, born 1811, a washerwoman of County Kerry. Research carried out by genealogist Giles Fielding and published by the Mail on Sunday newspaper shows that most of the men on her father's side were bootmakers in Northampton, central England. Her mother's lineage includes labourers, cottagers and servants in rural Lincolnshire. One of her great-grandfathers was a clockmaker attendant at a railway station. Thatcher, the only second Conservative Party leader not plucked from Britain's upper classes, apparently has none of the exalted origins which make her close ally, President Reagan, a cousin of all the monarchs of Europe.

Soviet paper appeals to save Christmas trees

MOSCOW (R) — Pine forests are dying out in the Soviet Union and Soviets may soon be celebrating their new year festival with bundles of twigs or artificial trees instead of the traditional fir, a daily newspaper reported. Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya said more than 50 million firs were cut down each December but there were not enough new trees to replace them as they needed five to seven years to grow. The paper said local authorities in the Republic of Armenia had already introduced a ban on felling fir trees. Sooner or later other areas would have to follow suit. It urged people to adopt the 18th Century Russian tradition of decorating bunches of twigs, saying they were far more practical and could even be placed in offices, or to buy artificial trees in a bid to save the disappearing forests.

Smokers to get tougher warning

MELBOURNE (R) — Australian smokers are to get tougher warnings on their cigarette packets about the hazards of smoking, health officials said. They said the new warnings, to appear on all tobacco products, would be brief and forceful rather than long and academic. The present caution, "warning — smoking is a health hazard", was considered too weak by a meeting of health ministers of Australia's six states, officials said. They considered slogans such as: "Smoking causes heart disease," "Smoking reduces your life," "Smoking causes lung cancer," and "the more you smoke the more you risk your health." They will draw up the precise wording at a conference in the middle of next year.

Bullet-filled log turns home into shooting range

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — A log made of pressed sawdust for home use unleashed a salvo of bullets in the living room of a startled San Francisco family, injuring nobody but hitting a couch, police said. The log, bought at a local supermarket, had apparently been boobytrapped with six or seven bullets. The ammunition exploded when the log was put on a fire at the unnamed family's home. The family called police because they thought the explosions were caused by firecrackers. But police found spent ammunition, including a .22 calibre bullet which hit the couch.